

# Fraternization Policy

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

This Fraternization Policy is designed to establish clear guidelines for workplace relationships within our organization. The purpose of this policy is to maintain a professional work environment, prevent conflicts of interest, and ensure fair treatment for all employees.

### 1.1 Definition of Fraternization

For the purposes of this policy, fraternization is defined as a romantic, intimate, or close personal relationship between employees that goes beyond the bounds of a typical professional working relationship.

### 1.2 Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all employees, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or position within the company. It covers relationships between coworkers, as well as relationships between supervisors and subordinates.

## 2. General Guidelines

### 2.1 Disclosure Requirements

Employees who enter into a romantic or intimate relationship with a coworker must disclose this relationship to their immediate supervisor or the Human Resources department within 14 days of the relationship's commencement.

### 2.2 Professional Conduct

Employees involved in a relationship must maintain professional conduct at all times while at work or during work-related events. This includes refraining from public displays of affection, favoritism, or any behavior that may make others uncomfortable.

## **2.3 Conflict of Interest**

Employees must avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise from their relationship. This includes recusing themselves from decisions that may affect their partner's employment, compensation, or career advancement.

# **3. Supervisor-Subordinate Relationships**

## **3.1 Prohibition**

Romantic or intimate relationships between supervisors and their direct subordinates are strictly prohibited. This includes relationships between managers and employees within their chain of command, even if not directly supervised.

## **3.2 Reporting and Resolution**

If a supervisor-subordinate relationship develops, both parties must immediately report it to Human Resources. The company will work to find a suitable resolution, which may include reassignment of one or both employees to different departments or positions.

# **4. Consensual Relationship Agreement**

In some cases, employees in a relationship may be required to sign a Consensual Relationship Agreement. This document acknowledges the relationship and confirms that it is consensual, voluntary, and does not violate company policies.

## **4.1 Contents of the Agreement**

- Acknowledgment of the relationship
- Confirmation that the relationship is consensual
- Agreement to maintain professional behavior in the workplace
- Commitment to avoid conflicts of interest
- Understanding of the potential consequences if the relationship affects work performance

## **5. Consequences of Policy Violations**

Violations of this Fraternization Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The severity of the consequences will depend on the nature and impact of the violation.

### **5.1 Examples of Policy Violations**

- Failure to disclose a relationship as required
- Engaging in unprofessional conduct or public displays of affection in the workplace
- Allowing a relationship to negatively impact work performance or the work environment
- Showing favoritism or making decisions based on the relationship rather than merit
- Retaliating against employees who report policy violations

## **6. Reporting Concerns and Complaints**

Employees who have concerns about potential policy violations or who feel they have been treated unfairly due to a workplace relationship should report their concerns to Human Resources or through the company's confidential reporting system.

### **6.1 Non-Retaliation Policy**

The company strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who reports a concern or files a complaint related to this Fraternization Policy. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **7. Training and Education**

The company will provide regular training and education to all employees on the Fraternization Policy, its importance, and how to comply with its requirements.

## **7.1 New Employee Orientation**

All new employees will receive information about the Fraternization Policy as part of their onboarding process.

## **7.2 Annual Refresher Training**

Employees will be required to complete annual refresher training on the Fraternization Policy and related topics such as sexual harassment prevention and maintaining a respectful workplace.

# **8. Policy Review and Updates**

This Fraternization Policy will be reviewed annually by the Human Resources department and legal counsel to ensure it remains compliant with applicable laws and continues to meet the needs of the organization.

## **8.1 Employee Feedback**

The company welcomes feedback from employees on the Fraternization Policy. Suggestions for improvements or clarifications can be submitted to the Human Resources department at any time.

# **9. Special Considerations**

## **9.1 Pre-existing Relationships**

Employees who are in a relationship at the time this policy is implemented must disclose their relationship within 30 days. The company will work with these employees to ensure compliance with the policy while respecting their pre-existing relationship.

## **9.2 Small Departments or Offices**

In small departments or office locations where alternative reporting structures may not be feasible, the company will evaluate situations on a case-by-case basis to determine the best course of action.

## 9.3 Company Social Events

While the company encourages employees to socialize and build positive working relationships, employees must remember that company-sponsored social events are still considered work-related activities. Professional behavior is expected at all times during these events.

## 10. Support and Resources

The company is committed to supporting employees in maintaining professional relationships and a positive work environment. The following resources are available to assist employees:

- Human Resources Department: Available for confidential consultations and advice
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Offers counseling and support services for personal and work-related issues
- Ethics Hotline: Provides a confidential means to report concerns or ask questions about policy compliance
- Company Intranet: Contains the full text of this policy, FAQs, and additional resources

## 11. Conclusion

This Comprehensive Fraternization Policy is designed to promote a professional, respectful, and productive work environment for all employees. By following these guidelines, we can maintain positive working relationships while avoiding potential conflicts and ensuring fair treatment for everyone in our organization.

We encourage all employees to familiarize themselves with this policy and to seek guidance from Human Resources if they have any questions or concerns.

Together, we can create a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to perform at their best.

Remember: A positive and professional work environment is the responsibility of every employee. By adhering to this Fraternization Policy, we all contribute to the success and well-being of our organization and our colleagues.